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Statistical Commission
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Item 2 of the provisional agenda
Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

Provisional agenda and annotations

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Annotations

1. Election of officers

In accordance with rule 15 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council and past practices, the Statistical Commission, at the commencement of its first meeting of a regular session, shall elect, from among the representatives of its members, a Chairman, three Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur.

The Bureau serves for two years. This is achieved by electing the Bureau for a period of one year and re-electing those members of the Bureau who continue to be representatives to the Commission at the following session. The Bureau is elected based on the principle of equitable geographical distribution — a member of the Bureau is elected from each of the regions represented on the Commission.

2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

The items on the provisional agenda and the corresponding documentation were proposed by the Commission at its thirty-third session (New York, 5-8 March 2002)[1] and approved by the Council in its decision 2002/298. Some changes have been made, in consultation with the Officers of the Commission. The proposed draft organization of work is before the Commission. The Commission may wish to adopt the agenda and organization of work for the session.

Documentation

Provisional agenda and annotations (E/CN.3/2003/1)

Note by the Secretariat on the organization of the work of the session (E/CN.3/2003/L.1)

Note by the Secretariat on the state of preparation of documentation for the session (E/CN.3/2003/27)

3. Demographic and social statistics

(a) Population and housing censuses

The report discusses the actions taken by the Commission at its thirty-third session,[2] and discusses how the United Nations Statistics Division proposes to incorporate the proposed activities into its work programme for 2003, the 2004-2005 biennium and subsequent bienniums.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/2003/2)

(b) Health statistics

The Commission will have before it a report prepared by the World Health Organization (WHO), which focuses on developments since the report submitted to the Commission at its thirty-third session. The report includes the recommendations of the Scientific Peer Review Group, consultations with countries and developments with the *World Health Survey*.

The Commission will have before it a report prepared by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, which briefly describes the current Australian system of health statistics. The report outlines the various sources of data and the frameworks used for organizing the outputs; lists the policy drivers and key issues that health statistics seek to inform, together with the data gaps and measurement issues confronting health statisticians; and suggests areas where international collaboration might be valuable in advancing the system of health statistics within countries.

The Commission will have before it a report on pressing issues in the area of health statistics in Botswana; the Commission may wish to comment on the issues raised in the report.

The Commission will have before it a report prepared by the Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat). The report finds that the adoption of a new community action programme on public health[3] has given an extra impetus to the further development of the statistical element of health information within the context of the community statistical programme for 2003-2007. The general emphasis is on reinforcement of the infrastructure for the basic system on public health statistics (at the member State and European Union levels) and on harmonization and improvement of the comparability of existing data; actions will be carried out in cooperation with international organizations active in this field, in particular WHO and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Documentation

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of WHO (E/CN.3/2003/3)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (E/CN.3/2003/4)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Central Statistics Office of Botswana (E/CN.3/2003/5)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of Eurostat (E/CN.3/2003/6)

(c) Social statistics

The Commission will have before it the report of the Secretary-General, proposing an expert group meeting to initiate work on the systematic development of social statistics. The report will also present a plan for the regular collection of statistics on disability through the *Demographic Yearbook* data-collection process. The Commission may wish to express its views on those proposed activities.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/2003/7)

(d) Washington Group on Disability Measurement

The Commission will have before it the report of the Washington Group on Disability Measurement, containing a summary of the conclusions of the first meeting of the Washington Group and plans for future meetings.

Documentation

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Washington Group on Disability Measurement (E/CN.3/2003/8)

4. Economic statistics

(a) National accounts

The Commission will have before it the report of the Task Force on National Accounts (Convener: Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts (ISWGNA)). Regarding the updating of the System of National Accounts, 1993 (1993 SNA),[4] the report addresses the ISWGNA recommendation regarding the accrual accounting of interest, discussions and conclusions on other topics; the review of the current updating mechanism; and the ISWGNA recommendations for improving the mechanism. The report also provides information regarding the assessment of the implementation of the 1993 SNA.

Under points for discussion, the Commission will be requested to express its views on:

(a) The proposed criteria for identifying issues that are candidates for updating;

(b) The proposed updating mechanism in which ISWGNA will play a managing role, with the assistance of the ISWGNA Advisory Group on National Accounts;

(c) The proposed deadline of 2005 for resolving issues and the publication target of 2008 for the revised 1993 SNA;

(d) The proposed list of issues recommended for review in the updating process (see annex II to the report);

(e) The terms of reference of the Canberra II Group.

Documentation

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Task Force on National Accounts (E/CN.3/2003/9)

(b) Measuring the new economy

The Commission will have before it a report prepared by the Office for National Statistics of the United Kingdom on a conference held by the International Association of Official Statistics (IAOS) in 2002 on the theme "Official statistics and the new economy". The report summarizes the conclusions of the conference, which cover the priorities for change in national accounts and other statistics to deal with structural changes due to information and communication technology, as well as leading issues in social statistics related to information society measurement. In addition, the report contains the views of the conference on appropriate actions to be taken by international organizations to meet the requirements for change. The Commission may wish to review the conclusions and recommendations for action.

Documentation

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Office for National Statistics of the United Kingdom (E/CN.3/2003/10)

(c) Agriculture statistics

The Commission will have before it a report prepared by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), providing an update on recent developments in agricultural statistics and future plans. The Commission may wish to comment on progress made in the field of agriculture statistics.

Documentation

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of FAO (E/CN.3/2003/11)

(d) Statistics of services (programme review)

The Commission will have before it a report prepared by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. The report reviews work undertaken internationally and in individual countries on conceptual development and practical measurement issues in the field of services statistics, including international trade in services. Issues of measurement in current values, prices and volume measures are covered. The report identifies areas in which further international collaboration might be useful and suggests modalities for how that might happen.

Documentation

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (E/CN.3/2003/12)

(e) International Comparison Programme

The Commission will have before it a report prepared by the World Bank on recent developments in the implementation of the International Comparison Programme at

the global level. The Commission may wish to review ongoing activities and comment on future plans.

Documentation

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the World Bank (E/CN.3/2003/13)

(f) International merchandise trade statistics

The Commission will have before it the report of the Task Force on International Trade Statistics, which will review the work accomplished by the Task Force in response to the decisions made by the Commission at its thirty-first session, as well as other activities that the Task Force has undertaken. The Commission may wish to comment on the progress and plans of the Task Force in both the methodological and data aspects of its work.

Documentation

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Task Force on International Trade Statistics (E/CN.3/2003/14)

(g) Statistics of international trade in services

The Commission will have before it the report of the Task Force on Statistics of International Trade in Services on its recent meetings and proposed future work programme. The Commission may wish to comment on the work programme of the Task Force.

Documentation

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Task Force on Statistics of International Trade in Services (E/CN.3/2003/15)

(h) Finance statistics

The Commission will have before it a report of the Task Force on Finance Statistics providing an update on the work of the Task Force, including information on recent meetings, activities and other outputs. The Commission may wish to comment on the completed work and proposed future plans of the Task Force.

Documentation

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Task Force on Finance Statistics (E/CN.3/2003/16)

(i) Ottawa Group on Price Indexes

The Commission will have before it the report of the Ottawa Group on Price Indexes, providing an update on recent meetings, activities and other outputs. The Commission may wish to comment on the work programme and proposed future plans of the Ottawa Group.

Documentation

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Ottawa Group on Price Indexes (E/CN.3/2003/17)

(j) Intersecretariat Working Group on Price Statistics

The Commission will have before it the report of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Price Statistics, containing an update on the status of the preparation of the manuals on consumer price indexes and producer price indexes, including recent meetings and proposed future plans. The Commission may wish to comment on the progress in the work of the Working Group.

Documentation

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Price Statistics (E/CN.3/2003/18)

5. Natural resources and environment statistics

The report on environment statistics contains (a) a summary analysis and assessment of the results of the two international data-collection exercises that the United Nations Statistics Division carried out in 1999 and 2001, following a recommendation of the former Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Coordination made in 1998; and (b) a proposal for a programme for the regular collection, compilation and dissemination of international environment statistics. The Commission may wish to comment on the evaluation of the results and discuss the suggested priorities and proposed work programme.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General on environment statistics (E/CN.3/2003/19)

6. Activities not classified by field

(a) International economic and social classifications

The Commission will have before it the report of the Secretary-General, which will describe work undertaken in the area of international classifications during the previous year and steps planned for the future. The report will summarize the recommendations made by the Expert Group on International Economic and Social Classifications and its technical subgroup. Detailed recommendations for the 2007 revisions of the International Standard Industrial Classification of all Economic Activities (ISIC)[5] and the Central Product Classification (CPC)[6] will be available in a concept paper as a separate background document.

The Commission may wish to:

(a) Comment on the recommendations for the revision of ISIC and CPC as outlined in the concept paper;

(b) Comment on the planned further steps in the revision process.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/2003/20)

(b) Harmonization of indicators and reporting on progress towards the millennium development goals

The Commission will have before it the report of the Secretary-General. The report describes the activities of the United Nations Statistics Division undertaken to follow up the recommendations of the Friends of the Chair that were endorsed by the Commission at its thirty-third session.[7] The Commission may wish to provide guidance for future work by the Division in this area and for the newly established standing advisory committee on development indicators.

The report also describes the work of the Division to prepare data and analysis for monitoring progress towards the achievement of the millennium development goals at the global and regional levels; it also discusses the millennium development goals indicator set in the context of data-quality issues, availability problems and the implications that the indicators have for statistical capacity-building. In particular, the report addresses the lack of international statistical standards and recommendations in some areas, as highlighted within the millennium development goals reporting framework.

The Commission will also have before it a note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on national millennium indicators. The report will address statistical issues in the context of country-level monitoring of progress towards the millennium development goals.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/2003/21)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of UNDP (E/CN.3/2003/22)

(c) Statistical capacity-building

The Commission will have before it the report of the Secretary-General, containing a brief description of the technical cooperation programme of the United Nations Statistics Division. The Commission may wish to discuss the report and comment on the technical cooperation programme of the Division.

In its annual report to the Commission, the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the Twenty-first Century (PARIS 21) provides a brief outline of its progress to date, future direction and forthcoming evaluation. The report summarizes the outputs achieved from advocacy work, information-sharing, task team activities and subregional/country workshops undertaken in the 2002 calendar year. The annex contains a summary of the indicators produced by the team convened by the International Monetary Fund to develop indicators of statistical capacity-building.

The Commission may wish to:

(a) Note the progress of PARIS 21 to date and the impending evaluation of the initiative;

(b) Comment on its future direction and programme;

(c) Review the proposed indicators of statistical capacity-building.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/2003/23)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the progress report of PARIS 21 (E/CN.3/2003/24)

(d) Follow-up to Economic and Social Council policy decisions

This item was placed on the agenda by the Commission at the request of the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1999/51. The aims are to encourage a closer relationship between the work of the Commission and of the Council. The Commission will have before it a note by the Secretary-General containing extracts from Council resolutions, decisions and agreed conclusions that are relevant to the work of the Commission and the actions taken or planned by the Commission. The Commission may wish to decide upon any action that may be necessary.

Documentation

Note by the Secretary-General on policy decisions of the Council that are relevant to the work of the Commission (E/CN.3/2003/28)

(e) Coordination and integration of statistical programmes

At its thirty-third session, the Commission requested[8] the international organizations to develop a new system for effective coordination given that the ACC Subcommittee on Statistical Activities had been disbanded. To address that concern, an inter-agency meeting was held in New York from 17 to 19 September 2002, the report of which will be before the Commission. At that meeting, it was decided to establish the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities. The Commission may wish to take into account, in its discussions under relevant agenda items, the views expressed by the inter-agency meeting.

The Commission will also have before it a report on the coordination of statistical data collection from countries as a follow-up to its discussions in 2001 and 2002.[9] The report describes the work of the United Nations Statistics Division, in collaboration with other international organizations, to eliminate duplication in data collection from countries. The Commission may wish to endorse the approach taken by the Division and other international bodies.

Documentation

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of an inter-agency meeting on the coordination of statistical activities (E/CN.3/2003/25)

Report of the Secretary-General on the coordination of statistical data collection from countries (E/CN.3/2003/26)

(f) Programme questions (United Nations Statistics Division)

The Commission will receive an oral report from the Director of the United Nations Statistics Division concerning current work and plans and priorities. It will also have before it the proposed list of expert group meetings and workshops to be held by the Division in 2003, for approval, and the proposed programme of work of the Division for the biennium 2004-2005, for review and comment.

Documentation

Note by the Secretariat on the proposed programme of work of the United Nations Statistics Division for the biennium 2004-2005 (E/CN.3/2003/29)

Note by the Secretariat on the expert group meetings and workshops to be held by the United Nations Statistics Division in 2003 (E/CN.3/2003/30)

(g) Problems in the implementation of the fundamental principles of official statistics

The Commission considered the agenda item "Problems in the implementation of the fundamental principles of official statistics" at its thirty-third session and decided to defer consideration of the item to its thirty-fourth session.[10]

7. Provisional agenda and dates for the thirty-fifth session of the Commission

In accordance with rule 9 of the rules of procedure, the Commission will have before it the draft provisional agenda for its thirty-fifth session, together with an indication of the documents to be submitted under each item and the legislative authority for their preparation; the Commission will also have before it a proposal for the dates of the session.

In addition, in accordance with the request of the Council (see Council resolution 1999/51), the Commission will have before it a draft multi-year programme of work for the period 2003-2006.

Also, following the call of the Council (see Council resolution 1999/51) for the promotion of greater harmonization and coordination in the work of its functional commissions, the Commission will have before it two notes summarizing the activities of the Commission for Social Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, respectively, that are relevant to the work of the Statistical Commission, including possible implications for the work of the Statistical Commission.

Documentation

Note by the Secretariat containing the provisional agenda and dates for the thirty-fifth session of the Commission (E/CN.3/2003/L.2)

Note by the Secretary-General containing the draft multi-year programme of work of the Commission (E/CN.3/2003/31)

Note by the Secretary-General on the activities of the Commission for Social Development and their possible implications for the work of the Statistical Commission (E/CN.3/2003/32)

Note by the Secretary-General on the World Summit on Sustainable Development and its possible implications for the work of the Statistical Commission (E/CN.3/2003/33)

8. Report of the Commission on its thirty-fourth session

The Commission may wish to adopt the report on its thirty-fourth session, which will be submitted to the Economic and Social Council.

Documentation

Draft report of the Commission on its thirty-fourth session (E/CN.3/2003/L._)

Notes

[1] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2002, Supplement No.4* (E/2002/24), chap. I, sect. A.

[2] Ibid., para. 5.

[3] Decision No. 1786/2002/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2002 adopting a programme of community action in the field of public health (2003-2008).

[4] Commission of the European Communities, International Monetary Fund, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, United Nations and World Bank (Brussels/Luxembourg, New York, Paris, Washington, D.C., 1993).

[5] Statistical Papers, Series M, No. 4, Revision 3 (United Nations publication, Sales No. 90.XVII.11).

[6] Statistical Papers, Series M, No. 77 (United Nations publication, Sales No. 98.XVII.5).

[7] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2002, Supplement No. 4* (E/2002/24), para. 66 (b).

[8] Ibid., para. 80 (d).

[9] Ibid., para. 80 (a) and (b).

[10] Ibid., para. 88.